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PATENT

REMARKS

The applicants have studied the Office Action dated January 16, 2004. Claims 1, 3, 8 and 20 have been amended, and claim 7 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. A new claim 25 has been added. It is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-4, 6, 9-15, 17, 20 and 22-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dahlman et al in view of Palenius. Claims 7-8 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 7. Claim 20 has also been amended to include a similar limitation. Claim 7 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Thus, claims 1-23 distinguish over the art of record.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 3-4, 6, 9-15, 17, 20 and 22-23 should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application and all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are requested.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 17-0026. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37

C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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